

## College Preparation

Now that you know what career area you are interested in and have selected a major course of study for college at a technical/trade school, community college, or four year university, you are ready to use the resources identified in this section to send you on your way to turning your dreams into reality.

### Guidance Central

[www.bridges.com](http://www.bridges.com)

- This is the PISD website for career and academic planning for all students. Each high school and middle school campus have a specific campus Site ID and Password to log-in for use. Contact the campus you attend for access.

### College for Texans

[www.collegefortexans.com](http://www.collegefortexans.com)

- This is the ultimate website filled with everything that a Texan needs to know about preparing for, applying for and paying for college or technical school. An easy to navigate website almost as big as the state itself.

### Scholarship Searches

Do you need dollars to help you fund your way through college? One way students can begin to finding dollars for college is to apply for scholarships. Below are some websites that offer **free** searches identifying scholarships based on the student's course of study, college planning to attend, financial background, heritage, academic achievement and much more – scholarships matched to each individual student!

Be aware of scholarship search scams. If you have to pay fee for scholarship assistance, think twice and take advantage of resources provided that you do not have to pay a fee. Take those dollars that a company charges for a fee, and put that money in a scholarship for you!

Take the time to use one of these **free** resources – you will be surprised!

<a href="http://www.fastweb.com">www.fastweb.com</a>	<a href="http://www.whatnowgrad.com">www.whatnowgrad.com</a>
<a href="http://www.fastaid.com">www.fastaid.com</a>	<a href="http://www.scholarships.com">www.scholarships.com</a>
<a href="http://www.collegescholarships.com">www.collegescholarships.com</a>	<a href="http://www.scholarshipshop.com">www.scholarshipshop.com</a>
<a href="http://www.acenet.edu">www.acenet.edu</a>	<a href="http://www.gocollege.com">www.gocollege.com</a>
<a href="http://www.scholarships-ar-us.com">www.scholarships-ar-us.com</a>	<a href="http://www.wiredscholar.com">www.wiredscholar.com</a>
<a href="http://www.srnexpress.com">www.srnexpress.com</a>	<a href="http://www.college-scholarships.com">www.college-scholarships.com</a>
<a href="http://www.collegenet.com">www.collegenet.com</a>	<a href="http://www.collegefunds.net/free-scholarships.htm">www.collegefunds.net/free-scholarships.htm</a>
<a href="http://www.free-4u.com">www.free-4u.com</a>	

### College Entrance Testing

Students have two choices for college admission testing to four year colleges and universities. Students who will be attending a state-supported college or university must also meet the THEA test requirements. All Texas state supported colleges and universities accept both ACT and SAT for college admissions. Check the links below for information on these assessments, test dates and registration.

#### American College Testing – ACT

[www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

- The ACT measures achievement in four areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning.

#### Scholastic Aptitude Test – SAT I & SAT II

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

- **SAT I** The SAT College Board assessment include a written essay, reading passages, and new content from third year college preparatory math
- **SAT II** (Achievement Tests) consist of multiple-choice tests that measure students' knowledge of high school level course work. (The SAT II: Writing Test includes an essay component.) Many selective colleges and universities require that students take one or more of these tests as part of the admissions process or for placement purposes in college courses. Students should consult the admissions offices of the schools they are considering to determine if the SAT II subject tests are required. It is recommended that students take SAT II Subject Tests at the end of corresponding high school courses. For example, a student who completes chemistry at the end of the junior year is encouraged to take the SAT II Subject Test in Chemistry in June following the junior year.

## Texas Higher Education Assessment - THEA

[www.thea.nesinc.com](http://www.thea.nesinc.com)

- **Texas Higher Education Assessment (THEA)** is required before entering any Texas public college or university. Students must take and pass the THEA tests in reading, mathematics, and writing. The THEA Program consists of the three tests that measure skills students have learned in high school, advisement and placement, and remediation for students who do not pass one or more sections. THEA is not an admissions test. It will not limit students' access to college.

Students may be exempt from the THEA test if they score high enough on the SAT, ACT, or the exit-level TAKS test. Students are to check with the institution of higher learning that they plan to attend for meeting exemptions.

## Study Prep

Use these free websites to assist you in test prep for college admissions testing.

<a href="http://testprep.collegefortexans.com">http://testprep.collegefortexans.com</a>	<a href="http://www.collegeboard.com">www.collegeboard.com</a>
<a href="http://www.act.org">www.act.org</a>	<a href="http://www.review.com">www.review.com</a>
<a href="http://www.kaplan.com">www.kaplan.com</a>	<a href="http://www.gocollege.com">www.gocollege.com</a>
<a href="http://www.number2.com">www.number2.com</a>	<a href="http://www.applytexas.org">www.applytexas.org</a>

## College Prep Testing

[www.collegeboard.com/psat](http://www.collegeboard.com/psat)

- **PSAT** - The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test provides students an opportunity to take a practice test that is very much like the SAT they may take as a part of their college admissions process. Any freshman, sophomore, or junior may take this test, which is offered in PISD. Juniors are strongly encouraged to take the PSAT. For juniors, the PSAT is the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. That means that if juniors perform exceptionally well on the test, they may be eligible for scholarships that could help finance their college education.

## Financial Aid

All students need resources for funding their post-secondary education. Financial aid comes in the form of scholarship, grants and loans. Scholarships have been mentioned earlier; therefore this section will focus on grants and loans. Grants are funds that students receive that do not have to be paid back whereas loans must be paid back. Grants may require students to maintain their grades and number of courses taken each semester.

- **Free Application for Federal Student Aid – FAFSA**  
[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

The FAFSA is the ultimate resource for grants both state and federal and the application needed for applying for college loans. Application begins January 1 each year, through June 30. Students need to be aware of the deadline for submission for the college they will be attending and also these funds are given out based on "first come, first served", therefore don't delay in getting this application submitted in a timely manner.

- **Texas Financial Aid Information Center**  
[www.collegefortexans.com](http://www.collegefortexans.com)
- **Government Web Site**  
[www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov)
- **Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board**  
[www.thecb.state.tx.us](http://www.thecb.state.tx.us)
- **Financial Aid**  
[www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)
- **Texas Guaranteed Student Loan**  
[www.tqslc.org](http://www.tqslc.org)

## Early College Start

There are four ways students may earn college credit while in high school. These include the following:

- Advanced Placement
- Concurrent Enrollment
- Dual Credit
- Tech Prep

### **Advanced Placement (AP) Credit**

[www.collegeboard.com/ap](http://www.collegeboard.com/ap)

- The Advanced Placement Program enables students to complete college-level studies while they are still in high school and to obtain college placement and credit on the basis of their performance on rigorous AP Examinations. Each AP course is based upon a national course outline equal to a first-year college course. At the completion of each AP course taken in high school, students have the opportunity to sit for the AP exam in that subject. AP exams are given only once a year, in May. Students do not have to take the AP course before taking an AP exam. Policies for granting AP credit vary. Students should consult the college admissions office to determine individual institution policies. In addition students who score a 3 or better on an AP exam will meet requirements of the Distinguished Achievement Program. To learn more about the PISD AP program visit the Advanced Academic website at <http://www.pflugervilleisd.net/curriculum/ap/AIndex.html>

### **Dual Credit Enrollment**

- Dual enrollment is a program for students who are simultaneously enrolled in PISD and a college where the college level courses may satisfy graduation requirements as well as earn college credit referred to as dual credit. In order for students to receive high school credit for dual credit courses students, must earn a 2.0 or better in the college level course. Students are limited to a maximum of two (2) college courses per semester.
- To take a course at the college level, a student must:
  - Be a junior or senior
  - Meet admission requirements of the college
  - Take the THEA or college design assessment or meet exemption qualifications
  - Complete the High School Student Request for Enrollment at ACC Form
  - Be recommended by high school principal
  - Have parental permission
  - Meet with college advisor prior to enrolling
- To learn more about Early College Start at Austin Community College log on to [www.austincc.edu/ecs/index.html](http://www.austincc.edu/ecs/index.html)
- Refer to the PISD Approved Dual Credit Course List for course offerings available at [www.pflugervilleisd.net/curriculum/cte/tech\\_prep.html](http://www.pflugervilleisd.net/curriculum/cte/tech_prep.html)

### **Concurrent Enrollment**

- Students who wish to take college level courses for college level credit may do so. Students are to meet the same requirements for college entry as for dual credit course work. Students may take concurrent course work to meet a measure of the Distinguished Achievement Graduation Plan (referred to as DAP). Students using Concurrent coursework for DAP, must select a course that has been identified for a DAP measure. A list of the courses may be located on the Advanced Academic webpage at: [www.pflugervilleisd.net/curriculum/ap/dap.html](http://www.pflugervilleisd.net/curriculum/ap/dap.html)

### **Tech-Prep**

- How well students perform in high school will determine their performance in our increasingly competitive job market. High school students now have the option of choosing career-oriented programs that offer them the chance to take technical courses for college credit.
- The aim of the high school tech-prep program is to prepare students with high skills and competencies for employment and for furthering their education. High school education is no longer enough to be competitive in the job market here in the Austin area as well as across the country. Tech-Prep integrates applied academics, career education and work-based learning. It is very important that students choose a course of study that will prepare them to meet academic and career goals. Due to the rigor of the Tech-Prep education plan, Tech-Prep students are eligible for the TEA Distinguished Achievement Program. Tech-Prep courses taken will earn students "advanced measures" of the DAP when earning a grade of 80 or better in the course and are identified as a Tech-Prep student.
- To learn more about Tech Prep and the articulated courses at PISD [www.pflugervilleisd.net/curriculum/cte/tech\\_prep.html](http://www.pflugervilleisd.net/curriculum/cte/tech_prep.html)

### **Texas Common Application**

[www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org)

- The Texas Common Application is the application used for applying to any of the Texas 35 state supported four-year institutions of higher learning. Information is given on the due dates, essay submissions required for each school, application fees, major offered, deadlines for financial aid information and more. Make this your resource for applying to these colleges.

### **NCAA Clearinghouse**

- Students pursuing athletic scholarships or more information in playing college sports and the requirements necessary to be competitive are highly encouraged to visit these websites based on the different divisions of colleges.  
[www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)  
[www.njcaa.org](http://www.njcaa.org)

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

It is very important that students take part in volunteer or community service activities while in high school.

Contact local organizations for learning of these opportunities.

Libraries  
Hospitals  
Community Centers  
Animal Shelters  
Schools  
Senior Citizen Centers  
Community Centers  
State Parks  
Environmental Organizations

Check out these websites for volunteer information

National Park Service	<a href="http://www.nps.gov/volunteer">www.nps.gov/volunteer</a>
Special Olympics	<a href="http://www.specialolympics.org">www.specialolympics.org</a>
America's Second Harvest	<a href="http://www.secondharvest.org">www.secondharvest.org</a>
Department of Veteran's Affairs	<a href="http://www.va.gov/volunteer">www.va.gov/volunteer</a>
Learn and Serve	<a href="http://www.learnandserve.org">www.learnandserve.org</a>
Idealist	<a href="http://www.idealists.org">www.idealists.org</a>
Landmark Volunteers	<a href="http://www.volunteers.com">www.volunteers.com</a>
U.S. Fish and Wildlife	<a href="http://www.volunteers.fws.gov">www.volunteers.fws.gov</a>
Habitat for Humanity	<a href="http://www.habitat.org">www.habitat.org</a>
Volunteer	<a href="http://www.volunteer.gov/gov">www.volunteer.gov/gov</a>
USDA Food Recovery	<a href="http://www.usda.gov/">www.usda.gov/</a>
Corporation for National Community Service	<a href="http://www.volunteermatch.org">www.volunteermatch.org</a>
America's Literacy Directory	<a href="http://www.literacydirectory.org/volunteer.asp">www.literacydirectory.org/volunteer.asp</a>
National 4-H Council	<a href="http://www.fourhcouncil.edu/">www.fourhcouncil.edu/</a>
American Red Cross	<a href="http://www.redcross.org/services/volunteer">www.redcross.org/services/volunteer</a>
Salvation Army	<a href="http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/www_usn.nst">www.salvationarmyusa.org/www_usn.nst</a>
Volunteering in Austin	<a href="http://Austin.about.com/cs/volunteering">http://Austin.about.com/cs/volunteering</a>

### **Internships**

- Learn about a career that you are interested in by doing an internship – try it you may not like it!
- To learn more about internships check out **Wet Feet**  
[www.wetfeet.com/asp/careerlist.asp](http://www.wetfeet.com/asp/careerlist.asp)  
Prepare your resume so that when opportunities are posted you are ready to take on the challenge of applying.

**General Information Websites**

There are many sites out there that can assist you in making that college choice, determining your major, essay writing and more. The following websites may assist you in determining decisions to reaching your goals.

<a href="http://www.texasmentor.org">www.texasmentor.org</a>	<a href="http://www.mycollegeguide.com">www.mycollegeguide.com</a>
<a href="http://www.collegeview.com">www.collegeview.com</a>	<a href="http://www.careercollege.ocm">www.careercollege.ocm</a>
<a href="http://www.embarc.com">www.embarc.com</a>	<a href="http://www.careersandcolleges.com">www.careersandcolleges.com</a>
<a href="http://www.collegebound.com">www.collegebound.com</a>	<a href="http://www.usnews.com">www.usnews.com</a>
<a href="http://www.collegecircuit.com">www.collegecircuit.com</a>	<a href="http://www.petersons.com">www.petersons.com</a>
<a href="http://www.realcollegelife.com">www.realcollegelife.com</a>	<a href="http://www.myessay.com">www.myessay.com</a>
<a href="http://www.xap.com">www.xap.com</a>	<a href="http://www.anycollege.net">www.anycollege.net</a>

Note: This web page contains links to web pages that are outside the PISD network. PISD does not control the content or relevancy of these web pages outside the district network.